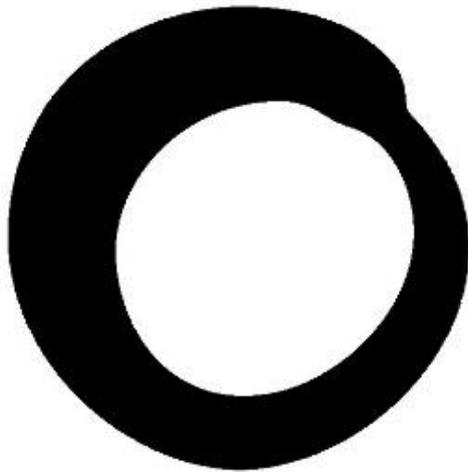


**Birmingham Friends of the Earth
and the Warehouse
Then and Now**

CAMPAIGNS

**Researched and Compiled
by Lesley Bradnam**



LOTTERY FUNDED

Thanks

To all past and present BFoE volunteers and workers who have contributed to this project.
To the Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Library of Birmingham.
This project was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Contact details

Birmingham FoE

If you'd like to get involved with or keep up-to-date with BFoE's current activities, please get in touch.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth
54-57 Allison Street
Birmingham B5 5TH

Phone: 0121 632 6909

Email: info@birminghamfoe.org.uk

Twitter: [@InTheWarehouse](#) | [@Bham_FOE](#)

Instagram: [@friendsoftheearthbirmingham](#)

Facebook: [facebook.com/inthewarehouse](https://www.facebook.com/inthewarehouse)

<http://facebook.com/birminghamfoe>

BFoE Heritage project

Please contact us if you have any amendments to this booklet or want to get more involved in the heritage project – it will continue beyond the life of the HLF funding. In particular, we're looking for memories and/or memorabilia from the 1970s-1990s.

Email: heritage@birminghamfoe.org.uk

Web: <http://www.birminghamfoe.org.uk/bfoe-heritage/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bfoe.heritage.5>

Twitter: [@BFoEHeritage40](#)

Introduction

The first Friends of the Earth group in Birmingham operated from private houses in the early 1970s. By the late seventies they ran a paper recycling project that rapidly outgrew a house in Passey Rd, Sparkhill. In 1977 the group took the momentous decision that, in addition to campaigning for a better world, they would demonstrate in practical ways a better way of living. A derelict building in Allison St., known as The Warehouse, was acquired as a base for this and for many more work projects and campaigns. The building itself soon was seen as a model to demonstrate what could be done with a more efficient use of an older building. All those in the building worked together to demonstrate that a more cooperative way of organising could be successful.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth (BFoE) has now been at the Warehouse for 40 years and as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Project celebrating this achievement a group of volunteers have spent time in the Library of Birmingham going through the archived material of BFoE. This largely covers the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. The archive mostly consists of newsletters from this period, but there are also photographs and minutes. Topics for research were allocated to each individual researcher covering: Campaigns, Projects, Admin & Governance, and Education & Publications.

The results of that work is shown in a series of pamphlets, of which this is one. Together they constitute a record of the early years of BFoE and the Warehouse. We are however aware that the archives don't record everything. If you see any omissions or errors, please let us know and we can amend. We see these as 'living' documents.

Information taken from BFoE Newsletters 1976-1989 and some meeting minutes

1. Overview of BFoE Campaigns

There was relatively little reference to campaign activity in the newsletters and minutes compared to projects and warehouse matters. So, it's clear what is presented here is not the full picture. For example, it isn't obvious from the newsletters that BFoE played a very key role in the national campaign to get lead out of petrol.

The activities of Pushbikes, Acid Rain, Tropical Rain Forests, Lead, Urban Wildlife, Pollution and Anti-nuclear activity (Birmingham Anti-Nuclear Group or BANG) were the main campaign themes documented. In the early days Food and Whales were also a key campaign. Urban wildlife disappeared from the BFoE agenda once the Urban Wildlife Group (UWG) was set up as a separate entity. Free range eggs and recycling also feature later on.

Key successes included:

Being part of the campaign to save the Post Office building in town rather than it being knocked down for redevelopment. Although the success is recorded as being only partial, as only the frontage was retained, it actually marked a key turning point in the city council approach to redeveloping the city centre and trying to keep where possible Victorian facades. (Nov 1976).

Helping to change attitudes to food and nutrition - in March 1977 BFoE felt it was necessary to produce a leaflet telling the residents of Kings Heath where they could buy wholemeal bread!

Pushbikes played a pivotal role in getting BCC to take on board seriously the needs of cyclists, and in changing attitudes to cycling.

BFoE was one of the first, if not the first, environmental group to put urban wildlife on the national agenda and to persuade the established national wildlife charities that cities were important habitats (when Chris Baines wrote to the RSPB asking for support in the Moseley Bog campaign they replied that they couldn't see how a suburban site could be of any relevance to them - or words to that effect).

BFoE played a key role in the national FoE campaign to get lead out of petrol and other products.

Just plugging away at a number of other campaigns over many years, raising awareness, writing to MPs, monitoring the local situation, going on demos. One of the most frequently mentioned campaign activity was urging members to write to their MPs about various issues

General campaign information – detailed notes

<p>Aug 76 Decided to have 4 separate campaign groups – Wildlife, Energy, Food and Paper/recycling</p>
<p>Apr 79 A list of environment related questions produced to ask candidates in the up-coming general election and help people decide who to vote for</p>
<p>Jan 80 Newsletter consisted entirely of a list of products produced by other local FoE groups</p>
<p>May 80 Concern expressed about lack of actual campaigning being done</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 81 Birmingham City Council City Centre Plan – a response being compiled</p>
<p>Nov 81 Campaign Strategy – A BFoE campaign strategy meeting decided that there is a need for better planned campaigns, and will from now concentrate on: Transport, Free Range Eggs and pollution.</p>
<p>Jul/Aug 83 Campaigns generally – worry that there is little campaigning going on apart from Pushbikes</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 84 Developing an idea to do more campaigning within projects. 2 leaflets being produced – ‘Why Insulation’ and ‘Why Recycling’.</p>
<p>Mar 84 Campaign Bus- purchased as a resource for BFoE, pushbikes and UWG</p>
<p>May/Jun 84 Campaign Strategy Meeting - resolved to reduce involvement in insulation projects and spend more time on campaigning.</p>
<p>May/Jun 84 WMCC funded the bus</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 85 Need some more expertise in a number of projects. Speakers to be arranged on transport, energy, pesticides</p>
<p>Sept 86 General Saturday street stall planned for October.</p>
<p>Sept 86 Campaign Strategy: Regular monthly meetings for activists. His meeting will coordinate the campaign groups and respond to requests for action from FoE national. Named member of staff to front each campaign</p>
<p>Nov 86 BFoE decided it would no longer accept cheques from Barclays (due to links with apartheid South Africa).</p>
<p>Nov/Dec 86 BFoE agreed they would have 3 campaign areas and there would be regular meetings of all groups: Tropical Rainforests, Safe Energy Acid Rain</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 87 Monthly Monday campaign meetings established. Busy with talks, including requests from professional bodies</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 87 Created 2 new exhibitions – Tropical Rain Forests and Nuclear Energy.</p>
<p>Sept/Oct 87 New people joining the Campaign Group. Will concentrate on local issues with short, well-structured campaigns with clear goals. Will start with recycled paper, local energy issues, transport and pollution.</p>
<p>Sept/Oct 87 Strategy Meeting Nov 1987: Decided to continue ‘campaigning, educating and motivating’. Want to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a higher profile locally • have more links with the local community • have more volunteer action • greater liaison with other groups.
<p>Aug 89 Campaigns now tackling Air Pollution, Energy Efficiency and Water Pollution.</p>
<p>Oct 89 Green Guide is to be launched on 12th Oct at the Council House</p>

2. Energy campaigns

Energy was a key campaign. The anti-nuclear campaign in Birmingham was fronted by BANG, so not a huge amount has been recorded in the newsletters, but BFoE was fully involved and active in campaigning for there to be a full enquiry into the reprocessing of waste at Windscale (including hiring a train to a demo in London), and in the campaigns against Torness and Sizewell B. Safe energy was the branding in the late eighties. Related to the campaign against nuclear power, BFoE members were also involved in the campaigns of CND and at Greenham Common.

Detailed notes

<i>Jun 76</i> Energy Group – held first meeting. Will write a paper on the health implications of a nuclear economy.
<i>Dec 76</i> Writing to MPs and Peter Shore re whether BNFL’s application to extend nuclear waste processing at Windscale should go to Public Enquiry.
<i>Jan 77</i> Meetings and speakers mainly.
<i>Mar 77</i> Anti-nuclear petition signing in town
<i>May 77</i> Writing to MPs about Windscale
<i>Jul 77</i> All efforts going into fund-raising for Windscale Enquiry fighting fund
<i>Oct 77</i> More fund-raising for Windscale and mass lobbying of MPs
<i>Jan 78</i> Planning on hiring a train to demo in London in March against expansion of nuclear fuel processing at Windscale.
<i>Jan 78</i> Energy Conservation Campaigner – have secured funding
<i>Apr 78</i> Writing to MPs about findings of Parker Report of the Windscale Inquiry
<i>Oct 78</i> 6 people went to Heysham to protest against proposed building of an AGR. There was also a small demo in Birmingham with people in white overall and a massive yellow drum.
<i>Dec 78</i> People went to Torness to support campaigners who were being evicted
<i>May 79</i> Minibuses going to demo at Torness
<i>Aug 79</i> BANG creating posters to fly-post!
<i>Oct 79</i> Stall in Martineau Square offering advice to public on Energy Conservation Day.
<i>Nov 79</i> BANG meeting fortnightly in the warehouse. Will be concentrating on local and educational side of campaigning and will put the message across through the medium of theatre. Also leafleting at showings of the China Syndrome.
<i>Mar 80</i> Anti-nuclear info sheets and posters being produced. Train hired by BFoE to go to anti-nuclear rally in London.
<i>Jun 80</i> Writing to MPs about proposals to reprocess plutonium at Windscale
<i>Jul 81</i> West Midlands County declared a nuclear free zone by the council
<i>Sept 81</i> CND Rally in Cannon Hill Park
<i>Sept 81</i> Energy Conservation – new campaign group planning a survey of public opinion and campaigning to stress that energy conservation should be at the heart of any energy policy
<i>Oct 81</i> BANG planning a protest at the UKAEA touring exhibition when it comes to Brum (in the context of WMids being a declared nuclear free zone)
<i>Aug/Sept 82</i> BANG focussing on Sizewell Enquiry

Nov 82 There was a reluctance to get involved in the campaign against Sizewell B as contributing to the Inquiry Fund wasn't thought to be the best place to spend money and fund-raising would not be easy as it was not an issue of massive public concern
Sept/Oct 83 CND demo in London
Nov/Dec 83 Greenham Common action BFoE and others went
Jul/Aug 84 Miners strike – BFoE supported, as coal is better than nukes while renewables are phased in. 'Coal has a vital role to play in an energy policy'.
Jul/Aug 86 Chernobyl leak. Demos held outside MEB showrooms. Discussions held with local labour party.
Sept 86 Week of anti-nuclear action with all MPs being visited by activists.
Sept 86 Safe Energy Campaign – mainly composed of BFoE and CND members. Writing a document
Sept 86 Sending Alternative Energy booklets to MPs.
Nov 86 Success Labour Party votes to phase out nukes
Nov/Dec 86 Coach from Birmingham went to anti Sizewell B rally.
Mar/Apr 87 Safe Energy – WMCND and BFoE organise coaches to a rally in London April 25 th . 'there will be some no-smoking coaches'.

3. Cycling and Transport campaigns

A cycle campaign was first mooted in 1978, along with a campaign against large rises in bus fares. From 1979 Pushbikes was meeting with BCC and persuaded them to produce pothole cards. By 1981 they were campaigning for the use of some pedestrian underpasses by cyclists, better cycle racks and cycle lanes on roads that go under the inner ring road. 1984 saw the first signed back bike route in Birmingham - from Moseley to city centre. Pushbikes also ran the successful Great Midlands Bike Ride. The mid-eighties saw campaigns against deregulation of the buses and the M6Toll.

Detailed notes

Oct 76 – made comments on the Birmingham City Centre Plan
Jul 78 Cycle campaign starts – want to do a survey of bike provision and 'what else needs improving' plus potholes.
Jul 78 Public transport – campaign against large increase in bus fares due to WMCC reducing subsidy.
Sept 78 Bikes – first meeting held previous month looked at obtainable goals and also arranged a bike ride. 13 came to the inaugural meeting. Plans to develop a 'routes for cyclists' booklet
Jul 79 Pushbikes – cycling to London to attend Bike Rally in London organised by national FoE
Aug 79 Pushbikes – first mention of this as a name
Sept 79 Pushbikes – met with Deputy City Engineer to discuss state of roads/potholes. Developing pothole cards
Oct 79 Pushbikes – persuaded BCC to produce the pothole cards themselves. <i>SUCCESS</i> . Talking to NCP about installing bike racks in carparks

<p>Dec 79 Pushbikes – finished submission to WM Structure Plan. Want more bus lanes and availability to cyclists; commends linear walkway ideas; call for more derestricting of cycling in parks; consider cyclists in the design of new road junctions; gradual creation of signed routes for cyclists.</p>
<p>May 80 Pushbikes – preparing a response to WMCC consultation on the canal network</p>
<p>Sept 80 Pushbikes – developing pothole cards to send to BCC</p>
<p>Nov 80 Pushbikes – DIY repair workshop almost up and running. Planning an all-day bike event next year.</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 81 Transport – campaigning for the use of canal tow paths and the 5 ways underpass by cyclists.</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 81 Transport – urging proposal to increase the maximum weight of lorries to 44 tonnes to be dismissed.</p>
<p>Mar 81 Pushbikes – campaigning for cyclists to be able to use bus lanes proposed in City Centre Plan. Also for the use of some pedestrian underpasses by cyclists, better cycle racks and cycle lanes on roads that go under the inner ring road.</p>
<p>Jul 81 Pushbikes – commented on the DoT consultation on cycling.</p>
<p>Nov 81 Pushbikes – carrying out a survey of cyclists to University of Birmingham</p>
<p>Dec 81/Jan 82 Pushbikes – have a place on the WMCC Highways Advisory Group and are campaigning for cyclists to be able to use the 5 ways underpass plus a 65km cycleway from Birmingham to Wolverhampton and on to Wombourne ‘this includes the towpath from the Bristol Road to Gas Street which should make a useful commuter route’. Also producing a <i>Backroutes for Cyclists Guide to Birmingham</i></p>
<p>Jan 82 Pushbikes – lots of pothole forms. Planning for GMBR.</p>
<p>Mar 82 Pushbikes – survey of cyclists attending Solihull Sixth Form College. Some people joined the Easter Peace Ride from London</p>
<p>Apr 82 Pushbikes – their first proposed cycleway (under Fiveways) was refused funding by DoT, but they suggested WMCC fund it. Campaigning for cycle provision as the middle ring road is upgraded.</p>
<p>Jul 82 Pushbikes – doing cycle counts</p>
<p>Aug/Sept 82 Pushbikes – ‘Cycling in Birmingham’ publication selling well.</p>
<p>Oct 82 Pushbikes – planning a cycle march and handing in of petition to WMCC demanding better cycle facilities</p>
<p>Nov 82 Pushbikes – targets for 1983 are : cycle routes; rural rides; better information; thefts; accidents (presumption from police etc. that a car/bike collision is the bike’s fault)</p>
<p>Jan/Feb 83 Pushbikes – Produced Cycling Policy for the WM. WMCC producing a response. Start of John Grimshaw’s off highway cycle routes. WMCC approved in principle Birmingham to Wolverhampton along disused railway line. Starting ‘rural rides’ – which eventually became the successful spin-off company Bicycle Beano.</p>
<p>May/Jun 83 Pushbikes – campaigning to encourage WM Mets to ‘think bike’ when designing road schemes.</p>
<p>Nov/Dec 83 Pushbikes – put up mock cycle way signs at the ring road/Gooch Street junction, and general campaigning for Stirchley to city centre bike route</p>
<p>Nov/Dec 83 There was a suggestion that BFoE started a ‘Save our Subways’ campaign – fighting for better lighting, access (lifts), safety etc. Also a suggestion that BFoE get involved in transport campaigning more generally and join the WMCC Highways Advisory Group with a broad environmental remit (Pushbikes already had a place).</p>

Jan/Feb 84 Pushbikes – <i>SUCCESS</i> – first signed back bike route in Birmingham - from Moseley to city centre
May/Jun 84 Pushbikes – Bike week. Played pothole Golf. GMBR took place.
May/Jun 84 Campaign group advertising for a Campaigner
Jul/Aug 84 M6 Toll - start of campaign against this road
Jan/Feb 85 Pushbikes – launched a legal aid scheme for cyclists involved in accidents
Jan/Feb 85 Transport – writing to MPs on proposed deregulation of buses, calling for subsidy of public transport.
Mar/Apr 85 Transport – writing to MPs about Transport Bill to deregulate buses
Mar/Apr 85 Leaflets about the Bus Bill have been printed to hand out to people in bus queues.
Jul/Aug 85 A discussion was held as to whether BFoE should support the campaign against Drinking and Driving. Opposing views were expressed.
Oct/Nov 85 Transport – BFoE remaining open minded about whether trams should be re-introduced to the city (<i>main sticking point seemed to be they didn't carry bikes. LB</i>)
May/Jun 86 Pushbikes. Lots of events held for National Bike Week, including Great Midlands Bike Ride.
Mar/Apr 88 M40 link road - people encouraged to oppose
May/Jun 88 M40 link road – <i>SUCCESS</i> – no new road. traffic will be signed into city via A45 or M6/expressway

4. Wildlife campaigns

Whales were the key issues of the 1970s, with ant-whaling demos (trains hired to go to London) and lobbying of MPs and the Japanese Govt. about whaling. Endangered species were also a key campaign, which then morphed into the Tropical Rain Forest campaign. In 1978 a decision was made to concentrate on local wildlife issues. Interest in this from a number of organisations and individuals led to the formation of the Urban Wildlife Group, which eventually became the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust.

Save Moseley Bog was a one off local campaign. Although BFoE didn't lead this campaign it played a prominent part, and was successful in 1986 when it was agreed by the city council that it would not be built on, and is now a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation looked after by the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust.

The Tropical Rain Forests campaign ran from 1986 and was still active at the end of the 1980s. Campaign largely consisted of writing to MPs, demos and monitoring local shops for sales of endangered species products. CITES (1989) can be considered a success, although poaching and habitat destruction are still considerable threats in some parts of the world.

Detailed notes

Aug 76 Wildlife – campaigning against Rackhams selling products from endangered species.
Oct 76 Wildlife - planning more action outside shops selling products from endangered species. Also pressurising MPs over Endangered Species Bill.

Nov 76 Wildlife – preparing an exhibition on Whales for the library. Demo outside Russian and Japanese Embassies in London. Letter writing to embassies.
Jan 77 Wildlife – monitoring of effectiveness of Endangered Species Act by monitoring what is sold in shops. Writing to MPs about Sperm Whale Products.
Mar 77 Wildlife – more checking of shops for endangered species products
Apr 77 Wildlife – crocodile demo outside Mappin and Webb.
May 77 Wildlife – writing to MPs about protection of otters
Aug 77 Wildlife – reptile petition – ban on imports of rare species
Aug 77 Whales – renovating the exhibition
Jan 78 Wildlife SUCCESS – now a crime to kill or harm otters
Jun 78 Whales – writing to MAFF urging them to support relevant motions at the upcoming IWC meeting
Oct 78 Wildlife – will concentrate on local issues and only support national campaigns when important to do so. Urban nature reserves and tree nurseries are the priorities.
Dec 78 Wildlife – prioritising tree nursery sites at Wolverhampton
Dec 78 Whales – letter writing
Jun 79 Save the Whales – train hired to go to national whale rally in London
Aug 79 Wildlife – took the 11foot whale to a Whale Demo in London.
Dec 79 Urban Wildlife – Pete Byfield appointed.
Jun 80 Endangered species – demo outside Perry Greaves (<i>Jewellers in Corporation Street, no longer trading</i>) against the sale of products from crocodile and lizard skin
Oct 80 Endangered species – compiling a list of shops that stock products from endangered species
Jan/Feb 81 Endangered Species – Collecting list of local shops selling goods from endangered species including crocodile, turtles and big cats
May 81 Wildlife – writing to MPs re Wildlife and Countryside Bill about the protection of SSSIs, extension of TPOs to cover other features such as ponds, and better protection for the countryside through improved planning regulation.
Jul 81 Save the Whale – Rally in London to coincide with International Whaling Commission meeting.. BFoE hired buses.
Apr 82 Wildlife – UWG concentrating on encouraging people to identify derelict land that could be turned into a community asset.
May/Jun 83 Wildlife - Otmoor campaign – to stop M40going through a semi-wetland Wheatley FoE have been offered a meadow to buy, to ensure they are consulted on the CPO, and are asking people to buy £2 min-plots to finance the purchase. Many BFoE people bought plots.
Jul/Aug 83 Urban Wildlife – concerns expressed about the building of the ICC etc. and whether the space would be better kept as open space.
Jul/Aug 83 Otmoor – 50 people from Birmingham bought plots at Otmoor to try to prevent the M40 going through it
May/Jun 84 Peckwood – writing to MPs about proposal to build M42 link road through it. Formal objection made to the proposal.
Jan/Feb 85 Urban wildlife – wrote to MPs to urge to support David Clark’s Private Members Bill amending Wildlife and Countryside Act.

<i>Jan/Feb 86</i> Urban Wildlife – Demo at Stubbers Green in Walsall, an SSSI destroyed by developers. Council now refused planning permission and hoping site will be ‘re-instated’.
<i>Jan/Feb 86</i> Tropical Rain Forests – leafleting and other events to pressurise manufacturers to adopt a ‘Code of Conduct’ through the Timber Trades Association
<i>Mar/Apr 86</i> Tropical Rainforests – demos outside stores selling teak & mahogany products getting signatures for petition.
<i>May/Jun 86</i> Tropical Rainforests Rally at Carrs Lane. 300 people attended. Speakers included David Bellamy, and Charles Secrett (FoE UK).
<i>May/Jun 86</i> Moseley Bog. SUCCESS No land will be sold to developers, including a small strip previously allocated for housing but now bought by BCC.
<i>May/Jun 86</i> Urban Wildlife Wild West Midlands Week. Events across the county to encourage residents to better appreciate wildlife.
<i>Jul/Aug 86</i> Tropical Rainforests. School education pack developed. MPS lobbied. Searching for retailers prepared to accept FoEs code of conduct.
<i>Jul/Aug 86</i> Urban Wildlife River Cole improvements finished. SUCCESS River Cole and Chinnbrook Conservation group set up in May 1985. UWG involved
<i>Sept 86</i> Tropical Rainforests pack from S Wales FoE being rewritten and improved in Birmingham following feedback from a workshop.
<i>Sept 88</i> Tropical Rainforests – Cricket match at Egbaston to raise funds/awareness. BFoE helps.

5. Pollution and Acid Rain campaigns

The pollution campaigning started in 1978 with Lead, and carried on to the mid-eighties when activity changed from campaigning for the removal of lead from petrol and other products to encouraging people to buy lead free fuel. The Royal Commission concluded that there is ‘no compelling argument for the retention of lead in petrol’ and it should be phased out entirely. Pesticides were also a key pollution campaign issue between 1984 and 1988.

The Acid Rain campaign ran from 1985 and targeted government, motorists, and the public. Also hosting European activists and training in spotting the signs of acid rain on trees. Desulphurisation of power stations and other emitters has since significantly reduced acid rain although there are still concerns over the levels of UK emissions.

Detailed notes

<i>May78</i> Waste Disposal – Local authority agree to involve BFoE in consultation of waste disposal in area plans
<i>Jun 78</i> Lead – first mention of it as a campaign issue
<i>Jul 78</i> Lead – members encourage to write to MPs about reducing lead in the environment because of the effects on children.
<i>Oct 78</i> Lead – demo at Motor Show at the NEC around lead in petrol.
<i>Dec 78</i> Lead –concentrating on learning about the issues
<i>Oct 80</i> Lead in Petrol – talk at the warehouse by Jeff Rooker (MP Perry Barr) to start the campaign
<i>Nov 80</i> Lead - writing to MPs. Jeff Rooker MP gave a talk at BFoE on what sympathetic MPs are doing.

<i>Jan/Feb 81</i> Lead out of petrol – urging support for the Early Day Motion on this
<i>Apr 81</i> Lead out of petrol (BLOOP) – letters written to MPs regarding Early Day Motion
<i>Jul 81</i> Lead out of Petrol – campaign for total removal of lead from petrol, not the reduction proposed for 1985.
<i>Nov 81</i> A Pollution Pack was to be produced concentrating on land reclamation, toxic waste and waste dumping
<i>Feb 82</i> Lead – CLEAR established– a new national campaign funded by a millionaire developer and fronted by Des Wilson
<i>Oct 82</i> Lead – CLEAR’s Lead testing Unit will be coming to 2 Birmingham schools.
<i>May/Jun 83</i> Lead - The Royal Commission concluded that there is ‘no compelling argument for the retention of lead in petrol’ and it should be phased out entirely.
<i>Jan/Feb 84</i> Launched Pesticide campaign. Information Sheet being produced.
<i>May/Jun 84</i> Pesticides – identified 7 of concern. Identifying shops that sell products containing them (Dieldrin, Aldrin, Captan, Thiram, Aldicarb, Dichorvos, 245T)
<i>Mar/Apr 85</i> Acid Rain – sending £1 each to Nigel Lawson (Chancellor) as part of campaign to get him to pay for CEGB desulphurisation of power stations
<i>May/Jun 85</i> Acid Rain Week – targeting car drivers with mock parking tickets campaigning for catalytic converters
<i>Jul/Aug 85</i> Acid Rain – coach from BFoE to Didcot for acid Rain demo
<i>May/Jun 86</i> Pesticides. Dossier being compiled for use by the city council.
<i>Sept 86</i> Acid Rain. Hosted 50 young European environmentalists for on a UK tour.
<i>Sept 86</i> Pesticides. SUCCESS. BCC agrees to remove tartrazine from school meals
<i>Nov 86</i> Acid Rain – Alison Ball went on a study visit to Holland, Germany & Czechoslovakia to be trained in identifying trees damaged by acid rain
<i>Jan/Feb 87</i> Acid Rain – action under BCCs Christmas Tree in Victoria Square, gathering signatures for petition.
<i>Jan/Feb 87</i> A list of garages supplying lead free petrol was publicised and people encouraged to use them (only 4 in Birmingham local authority area)
<i>Sept/Oct 87</i> European Youth Forest Action tour generated interest in Acid Rain and Tropical Rain Forests. Campaign Group undertook lots of outreach activities over the summer with help from placements and long-term volunteers.
<i>Nov/Dec 87</i> Lead free petrol – still encouraging people to buy petrol from those 4 garages that sold it
<i>Nov/Dec 87</i> CFCs – letter writing campaign started about CFCs in aerosols. A leaflet listing aerosols that did not contain CFCs was BFoEs fasting selling leaflet.
<i>Mar/Apr 88</i> Pesticides – campaign starting
<i>Mar/Apr 88</i> CFCs – Action against aerosols meeting held
<i>May/Jun 88</i> Pesticides – campaign targets ‘dirty dozen’ chemicals. Campaign to target MPs and Cllrs.
<i>Sept 88</i> Pesticides –a conference - joint venture between BFoE and regional Union of Safety and Health

6. Miscellaneous campaigns

BFoE was involved in a number of other campaigns, including against the demolition of the central post office, recycling and Freedom of Information (FOI). Battery Eggs was a campaign issue through the early and mid-eighties with demos and production of lists of suppliers of free-range eggs.

Detailed notes

May 76 Mentions Post Office campaign
Aug 76 Food – planning for Food Day in September
Oct 76 Post Office – 20,000 signatures on a petition
Nov 76 Post Office – likely compromise in retaining façade with ‘socially unnecessary offices’ behind. <i>Although it wasn’t presented as such in the newsletter, surely a SUCCESS given the change in BCC policy going forward of not demolishing old buildings, or at least retaining frontages.</i>
1977 Leaflet on high roughage diet recipes and ‘where you can buy wholemeal bread in kings Heath’ (<i>I think we can safely say this is a SUCCESS!!</i>)
May 78 First mention of the campaign against the redevelopment of the Victoria Square Post Office Building
Jan 79 Entire newsletter was a questionnaire about BFoE and its activities
Apr 81 Recycling – two bottle banks opened in Birmingham. BFoE doing research into how many bottles taken there could have been returned.
Aug 81 Recycling – commented on the Wm Draft Waste Disposal Plan
Oct 81 Free Range Egg campaign started.
Nov 81 Recycling – will be lobbying MPs on the forthcoming Beverage Container Bill asking for a deposit on all containers.
Nov 81 Free Range Eggs – compiling a list of suppliers
Jul 82 Recycling – now 4 bottle banks in Birmingham
Jan/Feb 84 BFoE to write to Des Wilson stating their support for his Freedom of Information campaign.
Mar 84 Animal welfare – Ban the Battery Cage demo in Birmingham followed by 5 mile march to Becketts Farm. Signed LP by UB40 to be raffled to raise funds.
Nov/Dec 84 eggs cages for chickens – another demo at Becketts Farm
Jul/Aug 85 Agreed that the proportion of tax that had been withheld as part of the Peace Tax protest would be paid, but there would be a publicity stunt involving walking through town.
Jul/Aug 85 BFoE was involved in the FOI campaign
Nov/Dec 85 Peace Tax campaign – walked through city with large inflatable earth and a sack with a cheque for tax owed to Inland Revenue and previously held back as part of the Peace Tax Campaign.
Mar/Apr 86 Seminars on ‘ Local Politics – pride and passion’ and ‘ Food Additives ’.
Sept 88 Woodgate Valley - campaign starts against housing and other developments.
Jun 89 Campaign group trying to organise a Recycling Game